(c) and (d) The clearance from the Public-Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC) has already been obtained for the project. After getting clearance from DDA, DUAC and ASI, the bidding process will be started and this process may take three months' time. The selected Concessionaire will have six months' time for the financial closure and thirty months' time thereafter for completion of the project.

Concern over use of weapons in Space

†*244. SHRI SHREEGOPAL WAS:
SHRI VINAY KATIYAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state.

(a) whether Government are concerned over use of weapons in space;

(b) if so, the measures being taken by Government for shielding against such weapons; and

(c) whether there is any proposal for carrying out deliberations in this regard with other countries?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Government are concerned that the longstanding international consensus on peaceful uses of outer space might be undermined by deployment of weapons in outer space as well as testing and deployment of weapons against outer space objects.

(b) and (c) Government continue to monitor developments on this subject and are committed to taking all necessary steps to safeguard the nation's security in accordance with its own assessment. Government continue to be engaged with international efforts to keep outer space free of weapons.

Setting up of National Science and Social Science Foundation

*245. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
MS. MABEL REBELLO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a view on the recommendation of National Knowledge Commission regarding setting up of a National Science and Social Science Foundation (NSSF);

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) if so, the details of the mandate of NSSF;

(d) what would be the linkages of the new foundation with the existing network of the research institutions in science and social science; and

(e) in what manner Government propose to avoid overlap in mandates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) Government has received the Report of the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) on "National Science and Social Science Foundation" which has been sent to the Department of Science & Technology and Higher Education for their comments.

(c) The objectives of the National Science and Social Science Foundation as proposed by National Knowledge Commission are:

* Suggest policy initiatives to make India a leader in the creation and use of new knowledge in all areas of natural, physical, agricultural, health, and social sciences, with an emphasis on those areas which cut across traditional disciplines;
* Ensure that science and technology are maximally used.for betterment of the lives of our people;
* Develop a scientific temper.

(d) and (e) The decision of the Government of India would take into account these issues.

Issuance of OCI cards

†*246. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BALAPTE:
SHRI VINAY KATIYAR:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of OCI cards issued as on date under the Overseas Citizenship of India Scheme;

(b) the details thereof, country-wise;

(c) whether Government are planning to formulate any scheme to give special facilities to the OCI card holders; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.